



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/574,637	04/05/2006	Kenji Kousaka	SSC-06-1067	4126
35811	7590	10/10/2008	EXAMINER	
IP GROUP OF DLA PIPER US LLP			ZHU, WEIPING	
ONE LIBERTY PLACE			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1650 MARKET ST, SUITE 4900				1793
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
10/10/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/574,637	Applicant(s) KOUSAKA ET AL.
	Examiner WEIPING ZHU	Art Unit 1793

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 October 2008.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 4-12 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 4-12 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/22/2008

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. Claims 4-12 are currently under examination, wherein claims 4, 7 and 10 have been amended in applicant's amendment filed on August 7, 2008.

Status of Previous Rejections

2. The previous rejections of claims 4, 7 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and the previous rejections of claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as stated in the Office action dated May 22, 2008 have been maintained.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 4, 7 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Jurmann (US 5,167,735) as stated in the Office action dated May 22, 2008.

With respect to the amended features of the instant claims 4, 7 and 10, Jurmann ('735) discloses the oxygen content in the annealing furnace is monitored and regulated during heating to maintain the oxygen content of less than 1×10^{-5} in the furnace (col. 2, lines 46-53)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Jurmann ('735) in views of JP 57-035620 as stated in the Office action dated May 22, 2008.

Response to Arguments

5. The applicant's arguments filed on August 7, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

First, the applicant argues that Jurmann ('735) teaches preventing and controlling formation of boron oxide by subjecting metal to a deoxidizing pre-treatment and not by lowering the partial pressure of steam in the furnace to less than 1×10^{-5} during heating as claimed. In response, see the reason of rejection of the amended features of the instant claims 4, 7 and 10 as stated in the paragraph 3 above. Jurmann ('735) clearly anticipates the claim limitations of the instant claims 4, 7 and 10.

Second, the applicant argues that JP ('620) does not disclose the target value of the partial pressure of oxygen in the furnace, nor does JP ('620) teach or suggest a partial pressure of steam. In response, the examiner notes that the ground of rejection of the claimed features relies on the teaching of Jurmann ('735) rather than the teaching of JP ('620).

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Weiping Zhu whose telephone number is 571-272-6725. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-16:30 Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on 571-272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Roy King/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
Unit 1793

WZ

10/3/2008

Application Number 	Application/Control No.	Applicant(s)/Patent under Reexamination
	10/574,637 Examiner WEIPING ZHU	KOUSAKA ET AL. Art Unit 1793